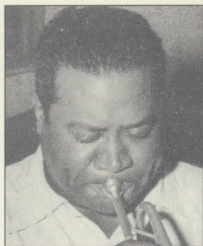


*John
Lindsay*



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*Herb
Morand*



HARLEM HAMFATS

VOL. 3

Complete Recorded Works In Chronological Order
6 October 1937 to 21 April 1938

*Rosetta
Howard*



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HARLEM HAMFATS

Complete Recorded Works In Chronological Order

VOLUME 3 · 6 October 1937 to 21 April 1938

1. Tempo De Bucket
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3. Time's A-Wastin'
4. Black Gal You Better Use Your Head
5. Root Hog Or Die
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18. Trading Old Love For New
19. Stay On It
20. Delta Bound
21. You Got To Go When The Wagon Comes
22. How Long Baby
23. Harlem Jambouree

The Harlem Hamfats not only revitalized popular blues in the last half of the 1930's by initiating a trend to a jazz-influenced small ensemble sound, but they also revitalized the spirit of New Orleans style small combo jazz by bringing a strong dose of blues tonality and rhythm to it and giving it shelter against the onslaught of big band jazz until the Dixieland revival of the 1940's could bring it once again to the limelight. The synthesis achieved by the Hamfats brought new class to the blues and provided badly needed work for veteran jazzmen who preferred not to play in sections with set arrangements in the dominant big band style. The sound of the Hamfats also reverberated elsewhere in the popular music world for a number of years. Shortly after their first record release, Billie Holiday made her initial recordings with a similar instrumentation, probably causing the Hamfats to retaliate a year later with their backing of the bluesier Rosetta Howard. Other jazz bandleaders probably took notice of the Hamfats, and it wasn't long before vocals began to be more prominent in a jazz setting and leaders like Louis Jordan began working with smaller combos about the size of the Harlem Hamfats. Although they often tended to be scaled down versions of the big bands, the jump bands of the 1940's can also be viewed as successors to the Hamfats sound, just as the Hamfats themselves were successors to the jug, skiffle, juke, and hokum bands of an earlier period. They synthesized Mississippi, Memphis, New Orleans, and Chicago blues and jazz elements into a sound that was able to appeal to millions of black Americans from these diverse cities and regions. They also reached quite a few white ears at the time. Their songs and their sound were frequently covered by western swing groups, who must have heard exactly what they were seeking in the Hamfats' recordings. Hip white Chicago jazz musicians like Bob Crosby's Bobcats fraternized with the Hamfats, and a number of the early collectors eagerly sought their recordings. Rosetta Howard's initial recordings must also have posed a serious challenge to those who were building a cult around the singing of Billie Holiday.

The front-line work of Herb Morand and Odell Rand gave the band a strong New Orleans flavor, but Charlie McCoy and Horace Malcolm could also convey the recently popular guitar/piano blues sound, while the rhythm work of guitarist Joe McCoy and the bassist and drummer added the power and enthusiasm of a downhome juke band. Morand and Joe McCoy both had strong, rough voices, the former redolent of New Orleans and the latter of Mississippi. Rosetta Howard was equally strong, but she added the northern sophistication of Chicago. When a gentler voice was needed for contrast, Charlie McCoy could occasionally handle the vocal duties. Their song material was equally diverse and consisted almost entirely of original compositions by Morand and/or Joe McCoy. Rosetta Howard also showed a considerable gift for songwriting. Morand was the most versatile songwriter, equally adept at

pop material and straight blues. His themes ranged from sentimental nostalgia for the Southland, as in "**The Barefoot Boy**," to a tough warning to a recalcitrant whore, as in "**Root Hog Or Die**." McCoy's singing displayed a similar thematic range, though he tended to be most comfortable with blues and ragtime material. There is a strong hokum element in the Hamfats' repertoire, and some of the songs by McCoy are updatings of ideas that he brought from Mississippi or his days with Memphis Minnie. McCoy and Morand are both notable for the prominence of themes of aggression and bullying directed toward women in their songs as well as for celebrations of marijuana and the underworld life. They come across in their songs as "players," hustlers, and pimps, and the band gives an overall impression of being a gang of hip studs prowling through the Chicago nightlife in search of reefer, good music, and mellow chicks.

The day after their superb session with Rosetta Howard, the Harlem Hamfats accompanied Johnnie Temple on four songs, giving him a couple of hits. Herb Morand sat out on these tracks, but he rejoined the Hamfats for ten songs of their own, including vocals on four of them. It was an exceptional session with varied material reflecting all of the band's musical sources and influences. Three weeks later they inexplicably recorded four tunes for Decca as the Palooka Washboard Band, with washboard substituted for drums. In late April, 1938, they were back in New York for a massive three-day session. The first day saw only one piece recorded, but twelve were cut on the second day, with Buster Bailey substituting for Odell Rand on clarinet. Bailey was an experienced and versatile musician and he was easily able to step into Rand's shoes and maintain the Hamfats' sound. Joe McCoy handled the vocals on five songs, mixing serious blues, aggressive warnings to women, and hokum double entendre. Rosetta Howard followed with seven selections, mixing pop songs and blues. Again the results were outstanding. "**Delta Bound**" expressed nostalgia for a Southland that probably wasn't very familiar to her. "**You Got To Go When The Wagon Comes**" was an aggressive piece with marijuana references, while "**Harlem Jambouree**" was clearly directed at a sophisticated black and tan audience. On the final day of recording Odell Rand returned on clarinet. Herb Morand opened with two splendid vocal efforts, which were good enough to prompt a British record company to release them. These were followed by six tracks each by Frankie Jaxon and Johnnie Temple that yielded several hits. The Harlem Hamfats had been in existence for two years and had achieved an extraordinary record of success.

David Evans
University of Memphis

1. Tempo De Bucket	62657-A-De 7382	(A)	2:34
2. You Got The Devil To Pay	62658-A-De 7382	(A)	3:05
3. Time's A-Wastin'	62659-A-De 7454	(A)	2:34
4. Black Gal You Better Use Your Head	62660-A-De 7439	(A)	2:35
5. Root Hog Or Die	62661-A-De 7439	(A)	2:53
6. You Got To Be Satisfied	62662-A-De 7406	(A)	2:25
7. Toodle Oo Blues	62663-A-De 7406	(A)	2:34
8. Rampart And Gravier Blues	62664-A-De 7395	(A)	2:38
9. What's On Your Mind?	62665-A-De 7426	(A)	2:39
10. Broken Hearted Blues	62674-A-De 7395	(A)	3:05
11. Don't Start No Stuff	63624-A-De 7466	(B)	2:39
12. Let Me Feel It	63635-A-De 7466	(C)	2:43
13. Little Girl	63636-A-De 7761	(C)	2:49
14. I'd Rather Be With You	63637-A-De 7454	(C)	2:38
15. I'm In So Much Trouble Now	63638-A-De 7530	(C)	2:44
16. I Believe I'll Make A Change	63639-A-De 7530	(C)	2:56
17. It Will Never Happen Again	63640-A-De 7515	(D)	2:49
18. Trading Old Love For New	63641-A-De 7515	(D)	2:43
19. Stay On It	63642-A-De 7459	(D)	2:27
20. Delta Bound	63643-A-De 7687	(D)	2:57
21. You Got To Go When The Wagon Comes	63644-A-De 7447	(D)	2:32
22. How Long Baby (Will You Keep Me This Way)	63645-A-De 7459	(D)	2:20
23. Harlem Jambouree	63646-A-De 7447	(D)	3:04

PERSONNEL:

- A: Herb Morand, tp/vcl on 1, 3, 5, 7; Odell Rand, cl; Horace Malcolm, pno;
 Joe McCoy, gtr/vcl on 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11; Charlie McCoy, gtr/mand; John
 Lindsay, sb; Fred Flynn, d. _____ New York City, 6 October 1937
- B: same as for A. _____ New York City, 20 April 1938
- C: Herb Morand, tp; Buster Bailey, cl; Horace Malcolm, pno; Joe McCoy, gtr/vcl;
 Charlie McCoy, gtr/mand; John Lindsay, sb; Fred Flynn, d. _____ New York City, 21 April 1938
- D: Rosetta Howard, vcl; acc. the Harlem Hamfats: Herb Morand, tp; Buster
 Bailey, cl; Horace Malcolm, pno; Joe McCoy, gtr/vcl on 20; Charlie McCoy,
 gtr and/or mand; John Lindsay, sb; Fred Flynn, d. _____ New York City, 21 April 1938

NOTE: This is the third of 4 volumes. (Rosetta Howard's complete 1939-1947 recordings are available on RST JPCD-1514-2.)

Original recordings from the collections of Bob Graf, Daniel Gugolz, Johnny Parth, Tom Tsotsi.

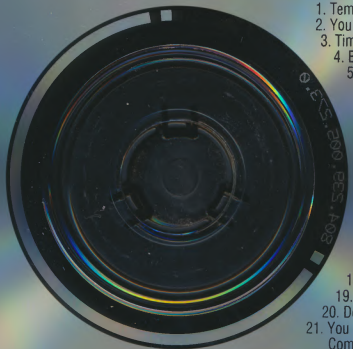
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COMPACT
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AUSTRO
MECHANA

A A D

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